

Natural History Museum
of Los Angeles County
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Dr. Jane G. Pisano
President and Director



April 26, 2011

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**HEARING ON INCREASING THE REGULAR ADMISSION FEES AND THE PARKING
RATES AT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

SUBJECT

Approval of the Natural History Museum's request to increase admission fees and parking rates at Museum facilities to defray increasing costs for enhanced exhibition and education programs.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD AFTER PUBLIC HEARING:

Set the regular admission fee at \$12.00, for the Natural History Museum and Page Museum at the La Brea Tar Pits, effective May 1, 2011 and approve an increase in the parking rate to \$8.00, at the Car Park in Exposition Park, effective May 1, 2011.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The purpose of the recommended actions is to allow the Museum to increase admission fees from \$9.00 to \$12.00 at the Exposition Park site and \$7.00 to \$12.00 at the Page Museum at the La Brea Tar Pits to help defray increasing costs for enhanced exhibitions and education programs. The Exposition Park Museum's regular admission fees were last increased by \$1.00 effective July 1, 2003. This represents the only fee increase since March 1, 1994. The Page Museum has not had an increase since 1994.

The Museum has significantly increased its programming for visitors at both the Exposition Park Museum and the Page Museum at the La Brea Tar Pits. In order to maintain the quality and diversity of programs, it is necessary to increase the admission fees.

ADOPTED

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

3 April 26, 2011

Sachi A. Hamai
SACHI A. HAMAI
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Natural History Museum is one of the most accessible museums in Los Angeles with approximately one third of our visitors coming to the Museum for free, including over 200,000 school children. The Museum is committed to remaining accessible and will continue to provide free admission to the public twelve days throughout the year at the Exposition Park site and the Page Museum. In addition, the public will continue to be admitted free at all times to the William S. Hart Museum in Newhall. The Exposition Park and Page Museums will also continue their programs of free admission to all student groups with advance reservations from accredited schools, which it initiated in July of 1999.

The Museum has conducted a comprehensive survey (see Attachment) of other museums in Los Angeles and around the United States and found that the proposed fees are within the range charged by similar institutions. The requested admission increase is consistent with the cost of living increases in Los Angeles County since 2003 while still maintaining a fair price and maximum value for visitors.

The Exposition Park Museum has approximately 220 parking spaces in its new Car Park scheduled to open by May 2011. The Car Park replaces two surface parking lots. Elimination of the surface parking lots allowed the Museum to design 3.5 acres of new green-space and "learning gardens" that are scheduled to open in late 2012. In January 2009, the State raised its parking rates in Exposition Park from \$6.00 to \$8.00, while the Museum rate remained \$5.00. The Natural History Museum would like to have the authority to raise its parking rates to \$8 effective May 1, 2011. This action would bring the Museum's on-site rates in line with those in the State lots and will help offset the Museum's operating costs for enhanced exhibitions and education programs.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The recommended action is consistent with the County Strategic Plan Goals of Operational Effectiveness (Goal 1) and Community and Municipal Services (Goal 3.) These actions will generate additional revenue to maintain the quality and diversity of programs and open new galleries and spaces inside and outside the Museum.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

There will be no fiscal impact to the County. All admission and parking fees are retained by the Natural History Museum Foundation to support exhibitions and education programs of the Natural History Museum. This action does not affect net County cost.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Section 5120 of the Public Resources Code allows your Board to exercise any power necessary and proper to promote the objects and purposes of the Natural History Museum.

A public hearing is required pursuant to Government Code Section 66018 prior to the approval of new fees.

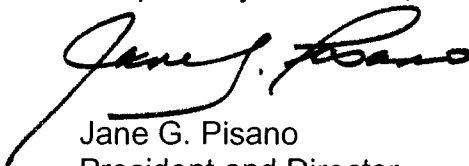
A Notice of Public Hearing was published by the Executive Office in accordance with Section 6062a, as required by Section 66018 of the Government Code.

With regard to fees imposed by local government, Proposition 26 amends Article XIII of the California Constitution (Proposition 218), to provide that any charge by a local government is deemed to be a tax, unless the charges qualify for one or more of the seven expressly enumerated exceptions. Charges imposed for entrance to and use of local government property are a specific exception. The proposed increases in admission and parking fees are specifically for entrance to and use of the Museum and help defray the cost of enhanced exhibition and education program for the specific benefit or privilege to the patrons, and constitute a charge for services to the payer for enrichment in history and science programs. Therefore, the proposed increases in admission and parking fees are not impacted by Proposition 26.

IMPACT ON PROGRAMS

These recommendations will permit the Museum to continue to offer quality exhibits and programs to a wide audience of visitors at all its facilities.

Respectfully submitted,



Jane G. Pisano
President and Director

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Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller
President, Natural History Museum Foundation
President, Board of Governors

Comparable Pricing Benchmarks 2003-2010

General Admission Fee Survey				
	2003		2010	% Change
	Adult	Adult	Adult	
NHM	\$ 9.00	\$ 9.00	\$ 9.00	0%
LACMA	\$ 7.00	\$ 15.00		114%
MOCA	\$ 8.00	\$ 10.00		25%
Field Museum of NH	\$ 10.00	\$ 15.00		50%
American Museum of NH	\$ 12.00	\$ 16.00		33%
Denver Museum	\$ 9.00	\$ 11.00		22%
Huntington Library (wkend)	\$ 10.00	\$ 20.00		100%
Norton Simon	\$ 6.00	\$ 8.00		33%
Petersen Automotive				
Museum	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00		0%
Autry Museum	\$ 7.50	\$ 9.00		20%
Aquarium of the Pacific	\$ 18.75	\$ 25.00		33%

Change in admission prices of comparables since last increase in 2003